

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, MARR, SP
SUBJECT: ARTICLE ON NUCLEAR SUBS AT ROTA

1. "EL PAIS" ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3, CARRIES ARTICLE BY
ANTONIO SANCHEZ GIJON, DATED WASHINGTON. HEADLINE:
"THE WITHDRAWAL OF SUBMARINES FROM ROTA MAY CREATE
DIFFICULTIES WITH THE UNITED STATES." ARTICLE READS
AS FOLLOWS:

"ONE OF THE CLAUSES OF THE TREATY . . . COULD
CREATE CERTAIN DIFFICULTIES WITH THE US, DUE TO THE
NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES WHICH ITS FULL ACCOMPLISHMENT
MIGHT PRODUCE. WE REFER TO THE CLAUSE WHICH DETER-
MINES THAT BY THE 1ST OF JULY, 1979, THE SQUADRON OF
NUCLEAR SUBMARINES BASED AT ROTA WILL HAVE BEEN
ENTIRELY WITHDRAWN.
THERE ARE REASONS FOR BELIEVING THAT THE
AMERICAN PLANS WHICH WOULD HAVE MADE THIS WITHDRAWAL
POSSIBLE, WITHOUT DAMAGING THE STRATEGIC BALANCE, ARE
NOT FULLY UNDERWAY FOR THAT DATE. IN THIS CASE,
PRESSURES ON SPAIN COULD DEVELOP TO PROLONG THE PRESENCE
OF THE NUCLEAR SUBS, UNTIL THE TIME WHEN THE PLANS ARE
COMPLETED.

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ALL THE PROBLEM REVOLVES AROUND THE NEW TRIDENT

PROGRAM, . . . WHICH WILL ALLOW THE AMERICAN SUBMARINES TO OPERATE FROM WATERS CLOSE TO THE AMERICAN COASTS . . . THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE PACIFIC BASE, ON THE WEST COAST, IS PROGRESSING AT A GOOD TEMPO, IN BANGOR, WASHINGTON . . . BUT NO DECISION HAS BEEN TAKEN ON THE TRIDENT BASE FOR THE ATLANTIC, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE SEVERAL PORTS WITH FEATURES COMPARABLE TO THOSE OF BANOGRA. IN ALL THIS QUESTION THE PROBLEMS OF THE ENVIRONMENT PLAY A FUNDAMENTAL ROLE. THE POLITICAL RESISTANCE OF THE GOVERNORS OF HOST STATES FOR A BASE IS UNDERSTANDABLE. SENATOR JACKSON WAS OPPOSED TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE BASE UNTIL CONVINCED OF TWO THINGS: THAT IT WAS VITAL FOR AMERICAN INTERESTS AND THAT THE SECURITY OF THE POPULATION AND OF NATURE WERE GUARANTEED. FINISHING THE BASE WILL HAVE TAKEN FOUR YEARS; ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS HAVE ONLY PROLONGED THE DELAY. BUT ON THE EAST COAST THE ENVIRONMENT IS A MUCH STRONGER TOPIC, BECAUSE OF THE HIGHER DENSITY OF THE POPULATION. FOR THIS AND OTHER REASONS, THE SITE SELECTION HAS NOT PASSED BEYOND THE STAGE OF MERE CONSIDERATION. IF THE NEW TRIDENT BASE IS NOT READY BY JULY OF 1979 (THAT IS, WITHIN THREE YEARS), IT IS LOGICAL TO EXPECT A PETITION TO THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT FOR THE CONTINUATION OF FACILITIES FOR POSEIDON SUBMARINES. NAVAL SOURCES IN THE PENTAGON SAY THAT IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TODAY TO PREDICT THE IMPACT OF THE TRIDENT PROGRAM ON THE BASE AT ROTA. THE FUNCTION OF THE ROTA BASE, ACCORDING TO THE TREATY, WILL CONTINUE BEYOND 1979, BECAUSE IT WILL CONTINUE TO BE A BASE FOR VISITS AND FOR SUPPLY FOR ONE OF THE TWO NAVAL FORCES WHICH THE USA MAINTAINS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, WITH THE LARGE ATOMIC CARRIERS AS ITS CENTRAL NUCLEUS. END TEXT.

2. SO FAR, NEITHER EMBASSY NOR JUSMAG/MAAG HAVE RECEIVED ANY INQUIRIES ARISING OUT OF THIS ARTICLE. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INSIGHTS ADDRESSEES HAVE TO OFFER.
EATON

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